

March 11, 2019



Kansas City Public Schools (KCPS) School Board Election Primer

**Shifting Focus from “the System” to “the Schools”:
Third-grade Reading Proficiency**

March 2019

Kansas City, Missouri



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Reading proficiency in third grade is highly predictive of academic and life outcomes. In KCPS 18% of third-graders read on grade level

MO State Average



KCPS Average

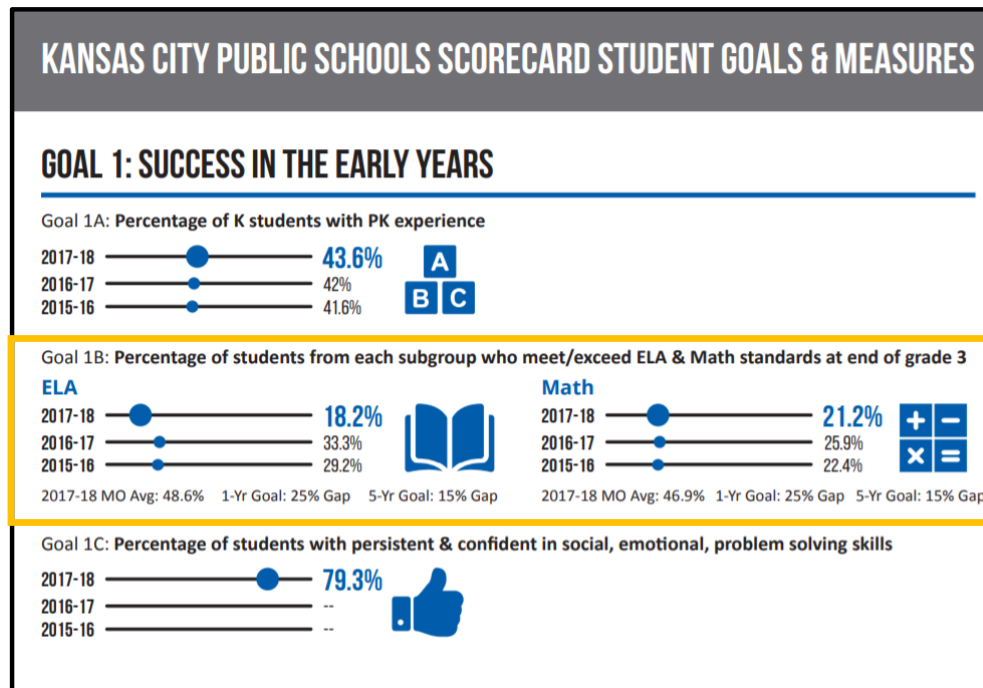


Research shows that:

- Third grade is a “**pivot year**,” when children transition from learning to read, to reading to learn
- Students who don’t read proficiently by third grade are more than **four times more likely** than proficient readers to leave high school without a diploma
- Black and Latino students growing up in poverty are **eight times more likely** than their affluent peers to drop out of high school, or not graduate on time
- Low third-grade literacy effectively **puts a ceiling on student achievement**, and on what school systems are able to achieve academically

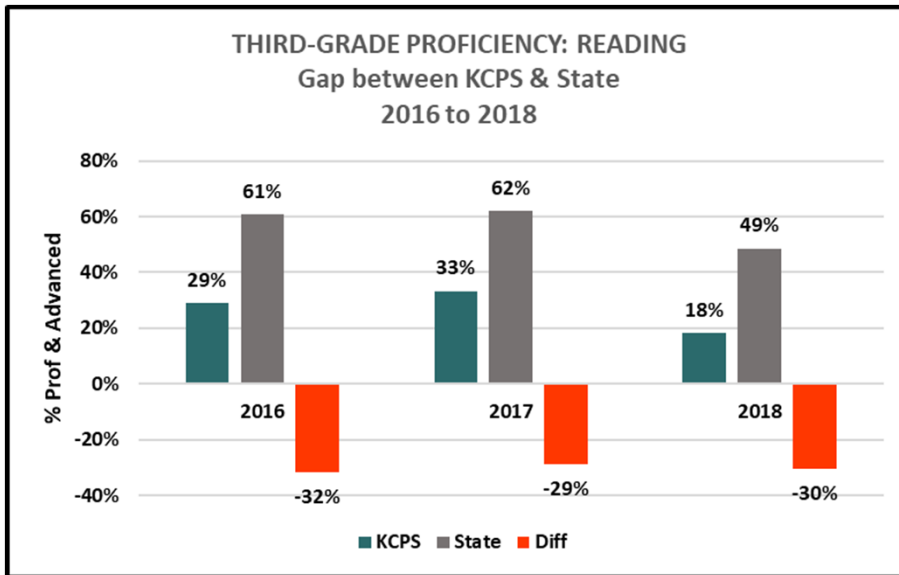
SOURCES: 1) <https://www.aecf.org/blog/poverty-puts-struggling-readers-in-double-jeopardy-minorities-most-at-risk/>
2) <https://www.aecf.org/resources/double-jeopardy/>
3) www.dese.mo.gov

Increasing the percentage of third-graders reading on grade level is included in the first goal of the 2018-2023 KCPS Strategic Plan



SOURCE: <https://www.kcpublicschools.org/strategicplan>

Over the last several years the gap between KCPS and the state-wide average for third-grade reading has remained flat

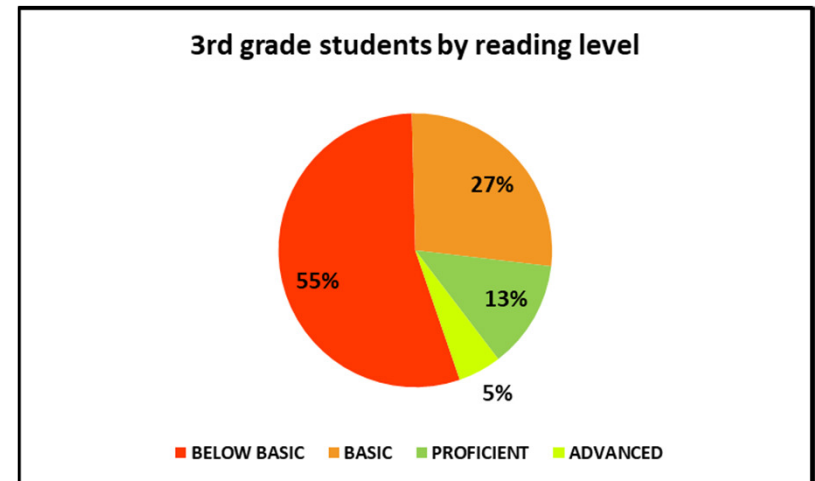
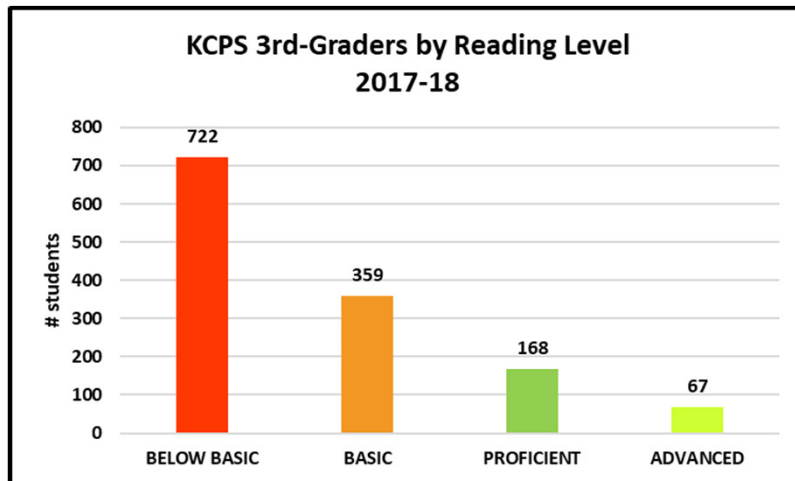


	2016	2017	2018
State	61%	62%	49%
KCPS	29%	33%	18%
Diff	-32%	-29%	-30%

NOTE: Because of changes in the MAP test between 2016 and 2017, and again in 2017 and 2018, it's not appropriate to directly compare 2016-17 with 2017-18 test results. Comparing **the difference between the state average and district proficiency for each year** is thus the best way to understand year-to-year progress.

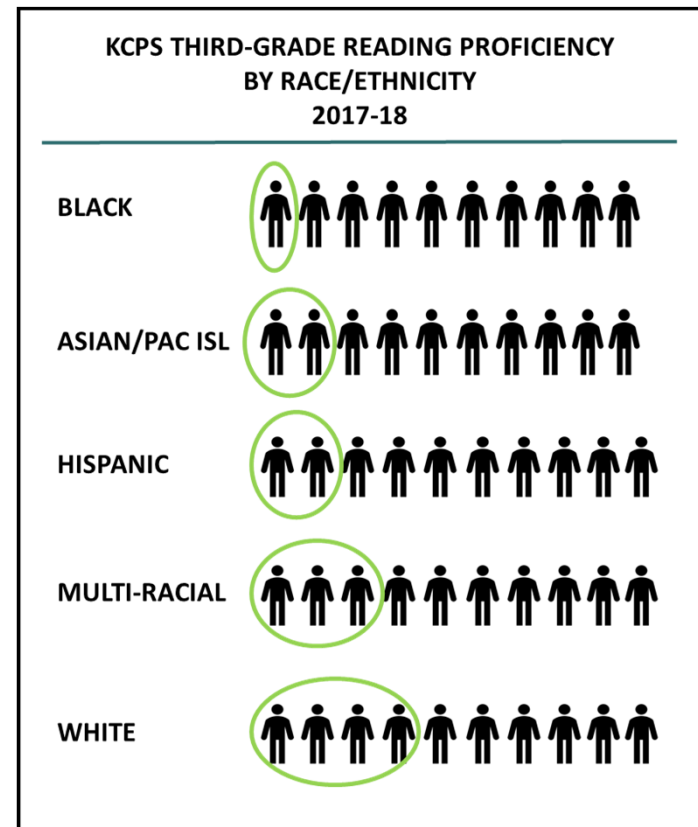
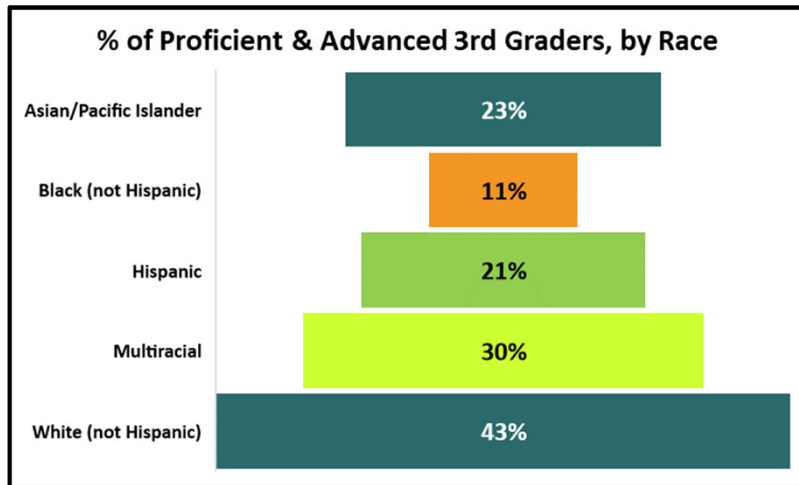
SOURCE: www.dese.mo.gov

In 2017-18 more than half of KCPS third-graders -- 55% -- read at a “below basic” level



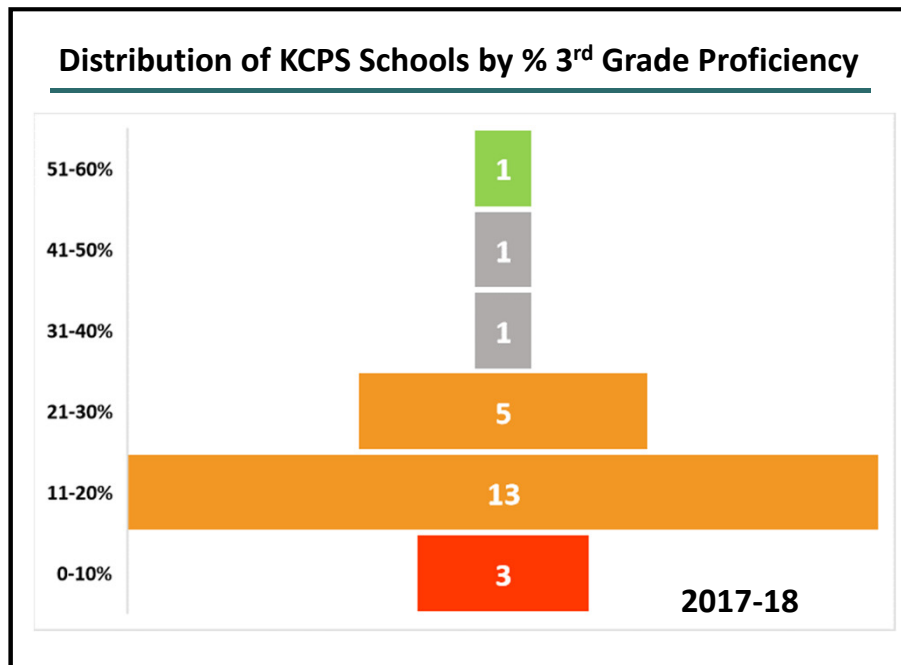
SOURCE: www.dese.mo.gov

There is a significant disparity in reading proficiency between different racial/ethnic groups



SOURCE: www.dese.mo.gov

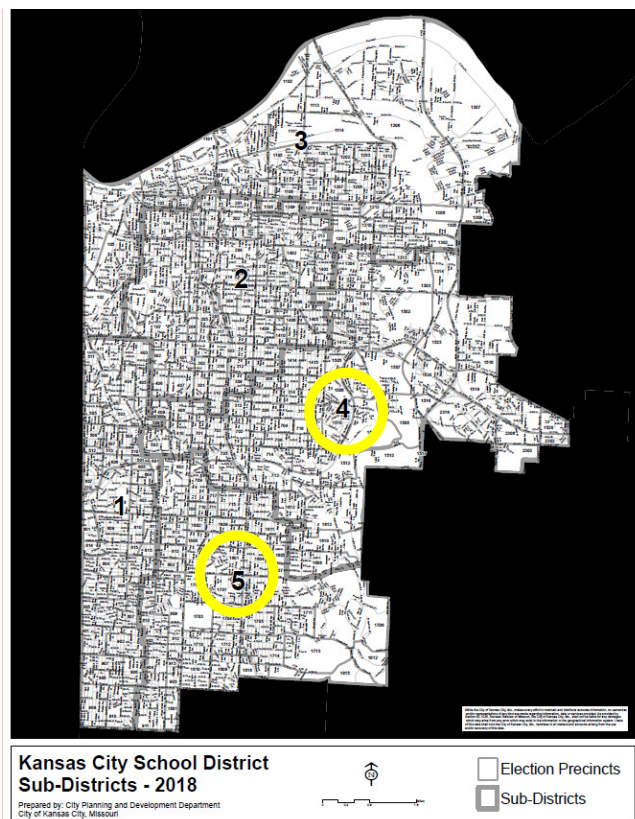
Two-thirds of KCPS elementary schools – 16 of 24 schools – have third-grade proficiency rates below 20%



THIRD GRADE READING PROFICIENCY 2017-18		
	KCPS SCHOOL	% Prof + Adv
1	Troost	3%
2	King	8%
3	AC Elementary	10%
4	Faxon	11%
5	Garfield	11%
6	Rogers	12%
7	Melcher	12%
8	Wheatley	13%
9	Longfellow	13%
10	Trailwoods	14%
11	Banneker	15%
12	Gladstone	16%
13	Phillips	17%
14	Garcia	17%
15	Whittier	18%
16	KC Neighborhood Academy	19%
17	Carver	22%
18	Foreign Language Academy	24%
19	Hartman	24%
20	Hale Cook	25%
21	Holliday	28%
22	James	32%
23	Pitcher	43%
24	Border Star	53%

SOURCE: www.dese.mo.gov

The three KCPS schools with lowest third-grade reading proficiency are in sub-districts 4 and 5



SUB-DISTRICT 5

Avg 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency: **12%**

	SCHOOL	% Prof & Adv
1	Troost	3%
2	AC Elementary	10%
3	Banneker	15%
4	Hartman	24%
5	Holliday	28%

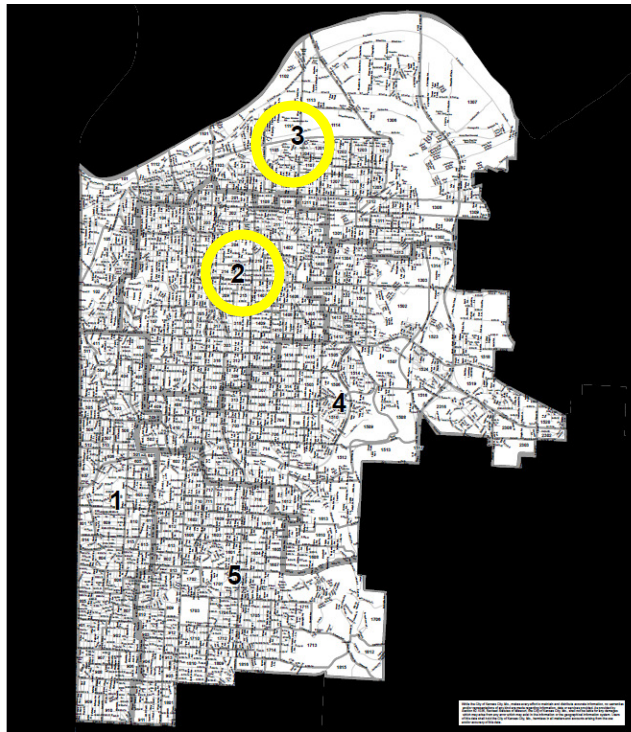
SUB-DISTRICT 4

Avg 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency: **15%**

	SCHOOL	% Prof & Adv
1	King	8%
2	Melcher	12%
3	Rogers	12%
4	Trailwoods	14%
5	Carver	22%
6	Pitcher	43%

- SOURCES: 1) <https://www.kcpublicschools.org/boardelection>
2) www.dese.mo.gov

Nine of 11 schools in sub-districts 2 and 3 have below 20% reading proficiency in third-grade



**Kansas City School District
Sub-Districts - 2018**
Prepared by: City Planning and Development Department
City of Kansas City, Missouri

Election Precincts
 Sub-Districts

SUB-DISTRICT 3

Avg 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency: **18%**

SUB-DISTRICT 2

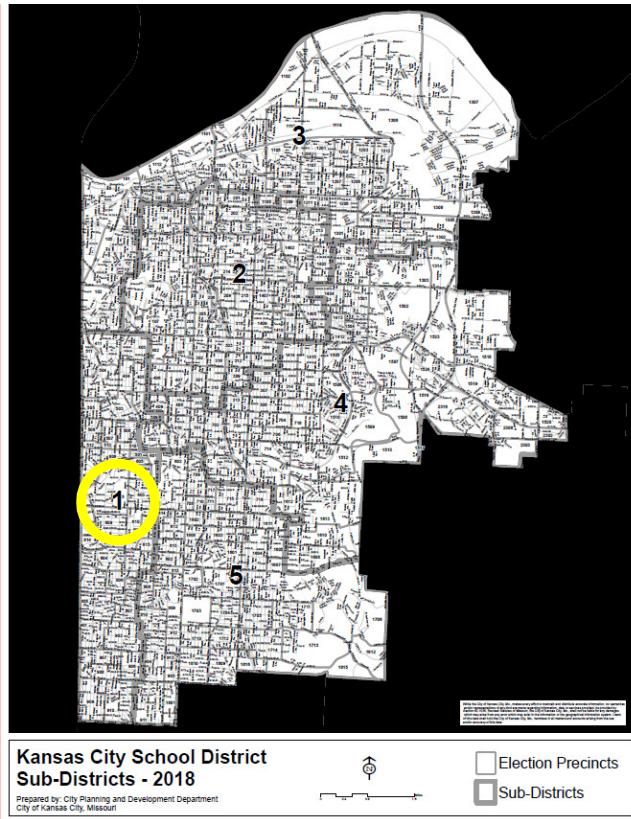
Avg 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency: **17%**

	SCHOOL	% Prof & Adv
1	Garfield	11%
2	Gladstone	16%
3	Garcia	17%
4	James	32%

	SCHOOL	% Prof & Adv
1	Faxon	11%
2	Wheatley	13%
3	Longfellow	13%
4	Phillips	17%
5	Whittier	18%
6	KC Neighborhood Academy	19%
7	Foreign Language Acad	24%

SOURCES: 1) <https://www.kcpublicschools.org/boardelection>
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Border Star, a signature school, has the highest third-grade proficiency in the KCPS system



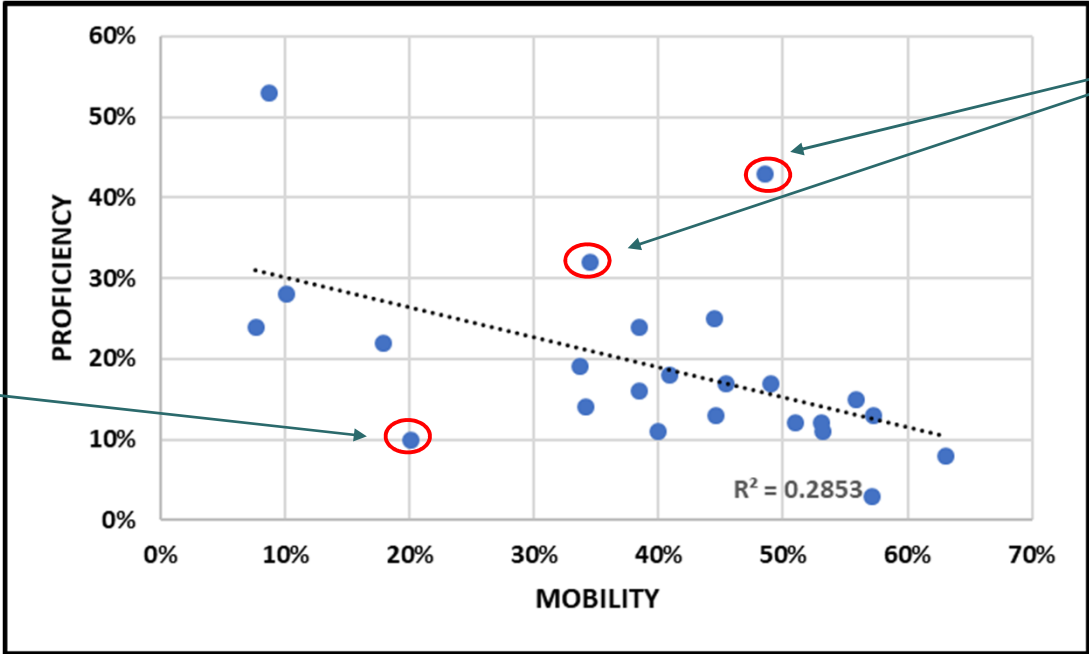
SUB-DISTRICT 1

Avg 3rd Grade Reading Proficiency: **35%**

	SCHOOL	% Prof & Adv
1	Hale Cook	25%
2	Border Star	53%

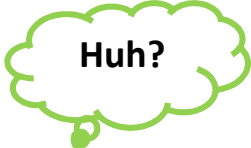
- SOURCES: 1) <https://www.kcpublicschools.org/boardelection>
 2) www.dese.mo.gov

There's a relationship between mobility and third-grade reading proficiency, but it's only part of the story



This school has low mobility, and low third-grade reading proficiency

These two schools both have higher mobility, and higher proficiency



SOURCES: 1) www.dese.mo.gov
2) Mobility data is from DESE website, school profiles

When the new KCPS school board takes office in April, they can help shift the focus from “the system” to “the schools.” Here are some ideas to help do this

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION:

- ✓ **Know the facts** about third-grade reading in your sub-district, and district-wide
- ✓ **Dedicate board workshop(s)** to examining third-grade literacy at the school level
- ✓ **Include third-grade literacy as a key metric** in the superintendent’s monthly report. This is a measure of academic health
- ✓ **Volunteer to be a reading mentor** in your local KCPS school: visit www.leadtoreadkc.org to sign up

QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- 1) What is the district’s **third grade K-3 literacy strategy**? How does implementation **differ from school to school**?
- 2) How is reading assessment data used to **inform school-level strategy and the allocation of resources** across schools?
- 3) What does the allocation of literacy resources across schools **actually look like**, compared to need? How can we fill the gap?
- 4) Could K-2 classrooms be **organized differently** to better support early literacy? For example, putting two teachers in the highest-needs classrooms to ensure more individual student support?
- 5) Below basic students make up the majority (55%) of third-grade readers. **What happens to these students** when they reach the fourth grade?

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